

# CORPORATION VS COMPANY

## SENSATIONAL SIGHTS ON BANK STREET YESTERDAY.

**City Shovellers Spread Snow on the Street Railway Tracks and the Company Turns out the Electric Sweepers—The Call of "Time" Ends the Skirmish for the Day.**

One of the most sensational events that has ever occurred in the history of Ottawa took place yesterday afternoon on Bank Street, in the shape of a desperate struggle between electricity and manual labor.

Shortly after two o'clock in the afternoon several men were started to work at shovelling the ridge of snow from the side of the street into the centre. The attention of the authorities of the Electric Railway Company was soon drawn to the matter and in a very short period the company's "walk-away" ploughs, which are on wheels and pulled by horses were brought into operation, and the fight began. The ploughs worked very well for a time, but the scattered force of the men kept blocking up the track so rapidly that it was very difficult for the cars to pass. Then again, the company were inconvenienced to a great extent by parties who appeared antagonistic to their interests, and who kept their horses standing in front of several of the stores apparently for no other purpose than to prevent the "walk-away" ploughs from passing.

The report of the disturbance spread rapidly around the city and by half past two people were streaming to Bank Street from all directions. The street, between Slater and Cooper Streets, was soon black with people, and the excitement grew intense. Whenever a car appeared and plunged its way through partly buried tracks, loud cheers would come from the people on either side of the street.

### THE SWEEPERS TO THE RESCUE.

The company, anticipating a somewhat difficult time to pull through, decided to bring out the sweepers, and this was the signal for more excitement and amusement. As the first sweeper made its appearance at the corner of Bank and Albert Streets a shout of exultation burst from the crowd. Its powerful brushes were set in motion without delay and the snow which had been placed on the tracks by the exertions of the men, was swiftly whirled back to the sides of the street. This increased the enjoyment of the spectators a hundred fold, and was happiness unalloyed for the irrepressible youths who gave vent to their feelings as the sweeper glided by.

The men, on the arrival of this dangerous enemy, worked all the harder, but their exertions were useless, and they seemed to know it themselves as they would laugh as the sweeper would come along and undo all that they had done. They were encouraged

on in their work by a few parties who considered themselves sufferers by the ridge of snow in front of their stores, and some of whom could be seen making threats with their fists to the driver of the sweeper.

The other sweeper belonging to the company was also brought to the scene of action, and it was then easily seen that the efforts of the men to level the snow over the street would be futile. The cars followed the sweepers, and in this way managed to get through with every possible ease.

### HE GOT A DOUSING.

At one stage of the affair, a proprietor of a certain establishment on the street, attempted to block the motors of one of the sweepers with snow while it stopped running for a few seconds, but the current was put to the brushes a little sooner than he expected and he was almost suffocated by the snow that was whirled in his face. He staggered back on the sidewalk while the crowd laughed and cheered at his fruitless attempt to impair the workings of the sweeper.

The crowd was entertained by the open air performance up to five o'clock when the men, having completed their afternoon's work retired, and the sweepers and other implements of the company were brought to their respective quarters.

### MR. SOPER'S STATEMENT.

Mr. Soper of the company in speaking to the Citizen made the following statement. "The Company received no notice whatever from the city engineer that he intended taking such a high handed proceeding. On the contrary Mr. Surtees told our superintendent, Mr. Hutcheson, only four days ago that he considered we were removing too much snow and complimented the company upon the way the work was being performed. When I heard that the corporation men were shovelling the snow upon our Bank street tracks I telephoned Mr. Surtees and enquired if it was true. He replied, 'yes, and we will put on men to cover up every track in the city.' I afterwards met him on Bank street and enquired by whose authority he was endeavouring to block our traffic. He put his hand upon his breast and in a tragic manner said 'By my own authority, I, the city engineer.'"

"We had ample evidence during the afternoon" Mr. Soper added "that the public resent such uncalled for proceedings upon the part of the city engineer and such a senseless waste of money. We will keep our cars running in the meantime and take up the legal aspect of the affair afterwards."

Mr. Hutcheson, superintendent stated that last week Mr. Surtees told him he considered too much snow was being removed, and his action of yesterday was without any warning or any notification that the city engineer desired any change in the manner of removing the snow. No later than last Friday, said Mr. Hutcheson Mr. Surtees made the remark to him that there did not appear

to be so many complaints this year as last about snow on the sides of the streets. He appeared to be well pleased with the way the snow was being drawn away and said it was being done even more satisfactorily than he had seen it before.

### MR. SURTEES' EXPLANATION.

Mr. Surtees, being seen, said he was not to blame for the trouble. Parties along the street complained to him yesterday morning that the ridge along the street was a source of great annoyance to them, and asked that he have it removed. Accordingly he notified the new contractor, Mr. Neville, to fulfil his contract by spreading the snow on the street. At two o'clock he started

a few men to do so. The company then brought out their snow ploughs, when Mr. Neville put on a large force of men, and the fight commenced. When the company brought out their sweepers, the men and those who sympathized with them, lost their judgment and threw the snow on the railway tracks. He had placed Mr. Birkett there to see that the snow was not thrown on the tracks, but he believed Mr. Birkett could not prevent the shovellers from doing so.

He did not think it was necessary for him to order the contractors to remove the snow.